

Message Text

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TAGS: SENV, TPHY, US, MX

SUBJECT: HURRICANE AMELIORATION RESEARCH PROJECT

REF: (A) STATE 104051, (B) STATE 196017

1. SUMMARY. MEETINGS BETWEEN U.S. AND MEXICAN DELEGATIONS FAILED TO REACH AGREEMENT ON PROJECT. VARIOUS MEXICAN CONCERNS WERE EXPRESSED. A PRINCIPAL ONE (BEING REEXAMINED BY MEXICAN NAVY LAWYERS) IS RELUCTANCE TO PERMIT EXPERIMENTATION IN MEXICO'S CLAIMED (200 MILE) ECONOMIC ZONE. THERE WAS, HOWEVER, CONSIDERABLE SUPPORT EXPRESSED ON MEXICAN SIDE FOR DESIRABILITY OF PROCEEDING WITH PROJECT ALONG GENERAL LINES OF THOSE PROPOSED. AT END, BOTH DELEGATIONS AGREED TO A "MEMORANDUM OF INTENTION" WHICH SPEAKS FAVORABLY OF IDEA OF SUCH COOPERATION AND INDICATES INTENT TO CONTINUE NEGOTIATIONS "AS SOON AS POSSIBLE". END SUMMARY.

2. OPENING SESSION OF MEETING WAS ATTENDED BY PLANNING UNDERSECRETARY (AGRICULTURE AND HYDRAULIC RESOURCES SECRETARIAT) ING. GERARDO CRUICKSHANK GARCIA AND DIRECTOR-IN-CHIEF FOR TECHNICAL AFFAIRS (FOREIGN RELATIONS SECRETARIAT) JORGE VELASCO OCAMPO, BOTH OF WHOM EXPRESSED HOPE

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FOR FAVORABLE PROGRESS IN THE MEETING AND SOLUTION OF PROBLEMS. (CRUICKSHANK REITERATED HIS INTEREST IN COLLABORATION IN THIS FIELD IN A SUBSEQUENT DINNER TOAST). THROUGHOUT REST OF MEETING, MEXICAN DELEGATION WAS CO-CHAIRLED BY LIC. JORGE A. FUENTES M. (SRE) AND CAPT. SILVINO AGUILAR A. (DIRGEN OF MET. SERVICE, SARH, AND PRESIDENT OF MEXICAN INTERAGENCY METEOROLOGY COMMITTEE).

MEXICAN DELEGATION INCLUDED REPRESENTATIVES OF ALL MEMBERS OF INTERAGENCY COMMITTEE, TO WIT NATIONAL DEFENSE SEC., NAVY, COMMUNICATIONS AND TRANSPORT, PROGRAMMING AND BUDGET (INCLUDING DETENAL) AND NATIONAL UNIVERSITY (UNAM). U.S. DELEGATION WAS AS INDICATED REFTEL (B) PLUS S&T COUNSELOR AND NOAA/NWS TECHNICAL REPRESENTATIVE.

3. FIRST DAY'S MEETING DEVOTED LARGELY TO --IIN OF LATEST TECHNICAL PROGRESS ON PROJECT, UPDATING RESEARCH ACTIVITIES AND PLANS. BULK OF QUESTIONS CAME FROM UNAM PEOPLE AND WERE RELATED TO TRAINING FOR AND ROLE OF MEXICAN SCIENTISTS IN PROJECT.

4. AT OUTSET OF 2ND DAY'S MEETING, IT WAS AGREED THAT VARIOUS MEMBERS OF MEXICAN DELEGATION WOULD EXPRESS THEIR COMMENTS AND CONCERNS. NATIONAL DEFENSE REPRESENTATIVE (ZAMORANO) WAS NON-COMMITAL, INDICATING SECRETARIAT'S POSITION WAS UNDER REVIEW BY SUPERIORS. NAVY REPRESENTATIVE (SALAZAR) WAS POSITIVE TOWARD PROJECT SO LONG AS SEEDING NOT DONE CLOSE TO MEXICAN COAST. HE ALSO WAS UNDER INSTRUCTIONS TO ASK THAT SEEDING BE DONE OUTSIDE OF 200 MILE EXCLUSIVE ECONOMIC ZONE CLAIMED BY MEXICO. PROGRAMMING AND BUDGET REPRESENTATIVE URGED THAT THERE BE U.S. AND MEXICAN CO-DIRECTOR TO PROJECT. SARH (LATORRE) COMMENTED FAVORABLY ON THE PROJECT.

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5. U.S. DELEGATION (HESS) INDICATED OPERATION PLAN COULD BE DEVELOPED JOINTLY AS NEXT STEP FOLLOWING CONCLUSION OF AGREEMENT. IN DISCUSSING 200 MILE PROBLEM, U.S. (SHEETS) INDICATED THERE WAS ALMOST NEVER A STORM RIPE FOR SEEDING THAT NEAR SHORE, BUT THAT THERE WERE EXCEPTIONS, AND U.S. WOULD PREFER TO EXCLUDE STORMS ON BASIS OF PROBABILITY ELLIPSE APPROACH. THE U. S. SIDE MADE IT VERY CLEAR THAT THE PROJECT WOULD BE COMPLETELY IMPRACTICAL IF IT WERE EXCLUDED FROM ZONES INSIDE 200 MILE RADII FROM SOCORRO AND OTHER MEXICAN OFF-SHORE ISLANDS. (NAVY REPRESENTATIVE AGREED TO CHECK THIS WITH SUPERIORS IN HOPE THAT "EXCLUSIVE ECONOMIC ZONES" AROUND ISLANDS MIGHT NOT BE RULED OUT-OF-BOUNDS TO PROJECT). U.S. SIDE ALSO INDICATED IT QUITE WILLING TO HAVE DECISIONS ON WHICH STORMS TO SEED BE MADE JOINTLY, SO THAT MEXICO'S VETO POWER ON STORM-BY-STORM BASIS MIGHT RESOLVE NAVY'S PROBLEM. (THIS SEEMED TO SATISFY MANY, BUT NOT ALL MEMBERS OF MEXICAN DELEGATION).

6. MEXICAN DEFENSE REPRESENTATIVE INDICATED INTEREST IN HAVING DEFENSE PERSONNEL PARTICIPATE IN PROJECT, AN IDEA WHICH WAS WELCOMED BY U.S. DELEGATION. AGUILAR ASKED ABOUT

USE OF GROUND-BASED RADAR TO SUPPORT PROJECT, AN IDEA WHICH WAS NOT A PART OF U.S. PLAN, NOR NEEDED NECESSARILY, THOUGH DR. SHEETS INDICATED IT COULD BE CONSIDERED. MEETING RECESSED EARLY ON SECOND DAY TO PERMIT MEMBERS OF MEXICAN DELEGATION TO CONSULT WITH SUPERIORS.

7. AT OUTSET OF FINAL DAY'S MEETING, IT WAS INDICATED THAT

MEXICAN NAVY STILL UNDECIDED ON 200 MILE PROBLEM AND HAD REFERRED QUESTION TO ITS LEGAL DEPARTMENT. CAPT. AGUILAR COMMENTED THAT LEGAL INTERESTS WOULD OVERRIDE TECHNICAL INTERESTS. LIC. FUENTES EXPRESSED HOPE THAT THIS QUESTION COULD BE RESOLVED IN MEXICAN EXECUTIVE BRANCH (WITHOUT NEED TO REFER TO CONGRESS).
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8. MEXICAN DELEGATION PRESENTED DRAFT "MEMORANDUM OF

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INTENTION" (MOI). AFTER THREE MODIFICATIONS SUGGESTED BY U. S. DELEGATION, MEMORANDUM WAS SIGNED BY BOTH DELEGATIONS. TEXT FOLLOWS SEPTEL, BUT ESSENCE IS THAT BOTH GOVERNMENTS INTERESTED IN COOPERATING IN HURRICANE RESEARCH AND AMELIORATION AND AGREED TO CONTINUE NEGOTIATIONS AS SOON AS POSSIBLE.

9. U.S. DELEGATION PROPOSED NEW PARAGRAPH (FOR AGREEMENT)

INDICATING JOINT U.S. AND MEXICAN APPROVAL WOULD BE REQUIRED FOR EACH SEEDING EXPERIMENT.

10. UNDERSTANDING REACHED BETWEEN DELEGATION HEADS OUTSIDE OF MEETING WERE THAT (A) MOI WOULD BE MADE PUBLIC BY SRE AND EMBASSY; (B) MEXICAN OFFICIALS WOULD CONSIDER MAKING POSITIVE STATEMENTS TO PRESS ABOUT IDEA OF THIS PROJECT; (C) MEXICAN SIDE WOULD PREPARE A COUNTER-DRAFT AND PROVIDE IT TO US SOONEST, BUT WITHIN 3-4 WEEKS AT MOST.

11. COMMENT: GOM COMMITMENT TO IDEA OF THIS PROJECT IN PRINCIPLE, AS EXPRESSED IN MOI, WAS MOST POSITIVE OUTCOME OF MEETING. THE 200 MILE PROBLEM IS CLEARLY BIGGEST HANG-UP AT PRESENT. OTHER POTENTIAL ISSUES, E.G., LIABILITY, WERE NOT RAISED AND PRESUMABLY WON'T BE IN FUTURE. SOMEWHAT DISCOURAGINGLY, MET SERVICE REPRESENTATIVE (AGUILAR) WAS LESS THAN ENTHUSIASTIC IN HIS SUPPORT LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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FOR PROJECT, DESPITE APPARENT ENTHUSIASM FOR IT BY CRUICKSHANK, HIS SUPERIOR. SOME OBSTACLES REMAIN, BUT DOOR IS STILL OPEN AND PICTURE SHOULD BE CLEAR IN MONTH OR SO. REACTION WHICH DEVELOPS IN PRESS AND ELSEWHERE TO MOI AND ANY MEXICAN OFFICIAL STATEMENTS COULD BECOME A FACTOR IN FINAL GOM DECISION. MEANWHILE, AND BARRING AN UNLIKELY ORDER TO DESIST, MEXICAN DELEGATION (FUENTES) INDICATED IT WOULD CONTINUE TO MOVE TOWARD AGREEMENT ON BASIS OF U.S. PROPOSAL. LUCEY

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